(d) special features of New National Policy on Drought Proofing?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) *There is no proposal as* such under consideration.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Drought Prone Area Programme is in operation in 164 districts of 13 States. The basic objective is to minimise the adverse effects of drought and to promote economic development. National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas is being implemented in 25 States and 2 Union Territories. The approach and strategy of the project is moisture conservation and diversification of farming system for better productivity. Water Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas in North-Eastern States is also being implemented. As a result of the programme, the productivity in these areas has gone up.

The Ministry is not aware as such of any new policy on drought proofing.

Varieties of Wheat

†1250. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Scientists are carrying out a research on varieties of wheat giving more yield so that more yield can be obtained in comparison to the best varieties of wheat;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when these varieties would be provided to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Intensive research efforts are under way to develop superior high yielding wheat cultivars. The Major emphasis is on the development of superior genotypes with improved yield potential, resistance to diseases and other desirable traits.

Research is also going on the development of hybrid wheat and application of biotechnology in wheat improvement.

(c) Development of high yielding varieties of wheat is a continuous

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

process. New high yielding varieties are released every year, and during 1999-2000, nine such varieties were released.

Funds for Agriculture/Horticulture Development

†1251. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have provided amounts to State Governments for the development of their agriculture/horticulture research institutions;

(b) if so, the names of States which have received amounts during the last three years, with year-wise amounts provided to them; and

(c) the achievements of such institutions during this period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) The Department of Agricultural Research and Education does not provide any amount directly to State Governments for the development of their agricultural/horticultural research institutions.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Damage due to Rain and Floods

1252. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of damage sustained by different States due to torrential rain and heavy floods during the current years;

(b) whether the Central assistance have been granted to those States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) The State Governments of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala and Punjab have reported damage due to heavy rains/floods in varying degrees.

(b) and (c) As per the interim recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission, instalments of Central share of Calamiuty Relief Fund for the year 2000-01 have already been released by the Ministry of Finance to the States as follow:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.